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THE POWER OF MUSIC.

IN HEADLEY'S "Italy" occurs a passage, descriptive of services in the Sistine Chapel when the "Miserere" was performed, which is pronounced one of the finest pieces of writing and sympathetic delineation in our literature. Years have passed since we perused those pages; but that magnificent melody, which only a mighty genius could have conceived and caught for expression, is still vividly before us through the interpretation of the enthusiastic American. Had Headley only written the volume referred to, he would have had as honorable mention in our literature as "Eothen" has in the German. If any are ignorant of the power and purpose of this "mighty mass" of the Roman Church let him refer to the pages of Mr. Headley's book.

In a late number of the "Journal of Music," we find a translation of a description of the *Credo*, which seems to us to come from some truly noble pen—so appreciative is it in spirit, so touching in its association, so well defined in its criticism. As a record of the power of music let us commend it to readers who see no language in harmonies, no meaning in the mere cadences and intonations of song:

"To my astonishment the violinists laid their instruments down, as did all the rest of the orchestra, save four trombonists. And now, when the priest had intoned the *Credo*, the full choir began, utterly unaccompanied save by the four trombones, the recitation of the Confession of Faith, in D major, in the long-drawn note of a pal-estrina choral. With the first notes of this music I was filled with awe, and cold chills crept through my nerves, when, in the long cadence at the words *In unum Deum*, the drums fell in like the rolling of distant thunder. I seemed suddenly to find myself in the infinite dawn of the eternal heavens, throughout which gleamed the far-off splendor of the Almighty. A bright light seemed to illumine the gloom of limitless space at the words, *Factorem celi et terræ* (Maker of heaven and earth)—and in the mighty harmonies which in vast masses rushed through the cathedral upon the awe-inspiring thunder of the drums, the very columns trembled. But when the words came: *Et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum*, (and in one Lord, Jesus Christ)—and the holy name was but breathed in the softest *pianissimo*—then

bowed the heads of the vast multitude of believers involuntarily, like the field of grain before a gentle wind; and so it flowed and streamed and moved onward to the words, *Descendit de cælis* (he descended from heaven.)

An andante in G minor spoke peace to the excited soul, with the sweet flow of the softly touched violoncellos, and a soprano voice sang as from the clouds—

Et incarnatus est	And he became flesh,
De Spiritu Sancto,	Conceived through the
Ex Maria Virgine,	Holy Ghost,
Et homo factus est.	By the Virgin Mary,
	And was made Man.

Like the fragrance from an orange grove descended to us *Homo factus est*, with the blessed thought of peace: 'Yes, for us he became man!' and the confidence of faith softly slumbered in dreams of paradise.

Then suddenly the trombones called us back to life, with their solemn choral, and with awe-inspiring tune to bitter pain.

Crucifixus etiam pro .	He was also crucified for
nobis	us
Sub Pontio Pilato,	Under Pontius Pilate,
Passus et sepultus est.	He suffered and was
	buried.

In the softest breath of deepest sorrow died away the last tones. The final, deepest bass note of the organ also ceased. All was still, and our blood seemed to stop in our veins; then arose, like a whirlwind, the chorus, which announced the victory over death, and the resurrection, with not an instrument accompanying, in mightiest unison to an old church melody: *Et resurrexit tertia die!* (And on the third day he rose again.) A piercing tone from a trumpet sounded through the church and jubilant rolled the hymn onward, closing with a mighty fugue in three-four time: *Et vitam venturi sæculi. Amen.* (And the life of eternity to come. Amen.)

But a strange feeling almost of horror seized the soul at the close. For the comforting tones, which had promised a blessed eternity after this life, gradually disappeared in a constantly diminishing *piano*. It seemed as if with the swift motions of disembodied spirits, everything had withdrawn into the most distant and gloomy regions of space. All the wind instruments died away, and at the final *Amen! Amen!* breathed out in the choral style, no accompaniment was heard but a ghost-like *pizzicato* of the basses and single, distant pulse-like notes of the drums.

We stood as if enchanted; we no longer belonged to this life; we roamed with the spirits of the just made perfect *in vita venturi sæculi*, and trembled and shuddered in awe of the limitless sacred art and truth which had been poured out over us; and the distant depths of the high altar with its candle and angels, its priests, and its cloud of incense, seemed to us the secret places of the heaven opened to us in its blessedness."

Who, after perusing this, does not feel the spirit of worship in his heart? It is by such song that the Roman Church discourses to the soul, and lifts it to an appreciation of the majesty of that harmony which must sweep through the halls of heaven. Music, in Protestant Churches, is little else than a mere mockery of worship—a form to be gone through with, destitute of emotion, dead to pathos and spiritual impulse—a "performance," and nothing else. So true is this that the Protestants must go to the opera, or to the theatrical orchestra, or to the Catholic churches in order that their longing for the very richness of the "golden chords" may be gratified. Alas!

VULGARISMS OF SPEECH.



O we we realize how much of our daily conversation is made up of vulgarisms, for which there is not the shadow of an excuse? Stand aside; listen to the conversation of the groups of men that pass, and from gentleman and hod-carrier alike, you hear expressions which argue either a want of a decent knowledge of the dictionary, or a preference for vulgarity in rhetoric. In the case of the hod-carrier and cartman, it must be the former reason—in that of the gentleman it must be the latter, since few of that class would not resent any imputation against their education. What shall account for this general lapse? "Custom," you say. But why should "custom" induce the outrage of common sense and common excellence of utterance daily made in the use of *slang* for serious, earnest conversation? We find no good reason to offer, and must think it is in the taste of the age, which seems to prefer what is false and meretricious, rather than what is homely